

Razor clam season delayed due to shrimpy stock

Razor clams are a little shrimpy this year, causing state officials to postpone the season opener along Clatsop County beaches.

Most clams are too small for commercial harvesters and undesirable for recreational clammers.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife pushed back the traditional opening from Oct. 1 to Nov. 1, and perhaps even later.

The closure, which applies only to Clatsop County beaches, will allow the agency time to collect public feedback on management options.

"Razor clams are moderately abundant on Clatsop beaches



Courtesy ODFW

Most razor clams do not meet size criteria this fall.

this fall, but the population is currently dominated by small clams with shell lengths between 2 and 3 inches," shellfish biologist Matt Hunter said. "Recreational clammers typically try to avoid these small clams, and they are smaller than the 3 3/4-inch minimum

size allowed for commercial harvest."

Domination of the razor clam population by small clams isn't abnormal, he said.

"In 2004, we also saw large numbers of small razor clams along Clatsop beaches, but they were more variable in size with a few medium and large clams. Right now, it is difficult to find any razor clams larger than 4 inches."

Washington state also delayed the start of razor clam digs on the Long Beach Peninsula until late December due to similar concerns. In Oregon, the population includes even fewer medium and large razor clams.

Those on SNAP could receive small increases

Those who receive public assistance for food and utilities will find an increase this month.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service has approved an adjustment to the cost of living allowance and the standard utility allowance in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as Food Stamps.

The adjustment sets income guidelines and benefit allotment amounts, and the standard utility allowance determines the amount of heating and cooling costs an eligible person may claim. The adjustments went into effect Oct. 1.

Oregon SNAP participants do not need to take any action. The state will automatically recalculate cases and adjust when required.

Families may experience no changes, a \$9 increase or a \$4 decrease. Changes are based on a family's individual case and will be reflected in the October disbursement.

Just under one in seven Oregonians — or 626,038 — re-

ceive food benefits through SNAP. The amount of benefits received is based on many factors, including income and deductions for necessities like shelter and utilities.

The change in the 2018 standards won't increase the number of people receiving SNAP, and it does not change program eligibility requirements.

To be eligible, most families

must have income less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level and meet other eligibility factors. A family of four would be allowed a maximum income of \$3,870 per month or less.

Some individuals or families, which include a disabled person or a person at least 60 years of age, can be eligible for SNAP benefits with higher incomes.

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Firewood permits available

Permits to cut firewood in the Clatsop State Forest are now available.

Permits are \$20 and allow the purchaser to cut up to two cords. Each household can purchase up to five permits per calendar year. Permits are valid for three weeks after purchase or until two cords are cut.

Permits are available at the Oregon Department of

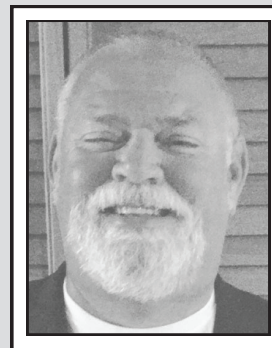
Forestry's Astoria Office, 92219 Highway 202, weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Firewood permits are sold by management basin, and purchasers can cut anywhere not shown as a restricted area.

A map can be found by visiting oregon.gov/ODF/Working/Pages/Firewood.aspx.

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